

# Atlanta Ham

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE ATLANTA RADIO CLUB, W4DOC

DECEMBER 2005

## HOLIDAY PARTY!

*Join us Thursday  
December 01, 2005  
for a Holiday Party!!*

**December Meeting:**  
Our annual Holiday Party. We will be catered at the Red Cross. The price will be \$10 for Adults and \$5 for significant others. Please join us at 7:30 for a great time.

**Before the meeting:**  
Demo at 7 PM and 7:15 ask the experts.



## Salem High School SHARC Looks for support from W4DOC

Volunteer work is an integral part in the development of a responsible citizen. In adolescence, success is "the product of preparation, hard work, and learning from failure" (Colin Powell). Extracurricular activities teach students these qualities, and it is through the commencement of the Salem High Amateur Radio Society that I hope to encourage a new generation of radio operators and to provide an opportunity for volunteer service and personal growth.

The station at Salem High School would offer many benefits to the school. Primarily, the involvement of a large group of otherwise unexposed students to amateur radio. Once introduced, many students will hopefully get licensed and become active members of the Salem High Amateur Radio Society (SHARS). Licensed students can then use the hobby as an avenue for social education and world-wide communication using HF; they will also become active members of their community using 2m. Besides these benefits, the club will give students who are interested in the electronic arts a chance to expand their knowledge base and hopefully show more students the varying possibilities of a career in electronics. To augment the appeal of SHARS, I hope to involve other faculty members and begin the implementation of the use of Amateur Radio in lessons.

Many community service opportunities exist for a licensed operator, and I plan to involve Salem's club in several. Ideally, club members could facilitate evacuation drills. In the event of true emergency, members could provide communication out of the school. With the proper training, each member will eventually be a qualified storm spotter in the circumstance of severe weather in the Rockdale/Newton area.

*(Continued on page 8)*

**Every Friday:** Please join the Atlanta Radio Club for lunch Fridays around noon at Frankie's (a Jock's and Jill's Franchise). At I-285 and Roswell Rd go south on Roswell Rd, 0.2 mile turn right. Frankie's drive way is the first driveway past the first Stop light. First stop light is Lake Placid Dr. After turning right and you will see it on the right.

## THE ATLANTA HAM

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Submit articles:

Atlanta Radio Club  
Attn: HAM EDITOR  
PO BOX 720398  
Atlanta, Georgia 30358

Contact the editor for available formats to transfer material.

**DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS IS THE 21ST OF EACH MONTH!**

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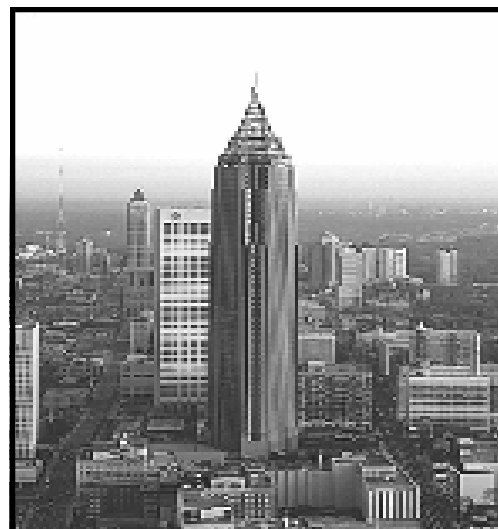
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## THE ATLANTA RADIO CLUB, W4DOC

Originally known as the "Atlanta Wireless Club," the Atlanta Radio Club is one of the oldest and largest amateur radio clubs in the United States. With nearly 200 members, the Club sponsors numerous activities and services for its membership and for the Atlanta area amateur radio community.

The Club is best known for its sponsorship of the annual Atlanta HamFestival, a Saturday event which hosts many vendors, exhibitors, and flea markets of amateur radio equipment and other electronic equipment.



Bank of America Tower  
Site of Atlanta Repeaters:  
146.82(-), 224.34(-) and 444.825(+)

## W4DOC REPEATERS

The Atlanta Radio Club operates five repeaters at two locations. Currently our most active project is at the Bank of America Tower where we operate three repeaters at 146.82(-), 224.34 (-), and 444.825(+). On the web, go to <http://www.saf.com/arc/repeater.pdf> for a Acrobat 4.0 diagram of our system.

Our second location is the WFOX broadcast tower at Chestnut Mountain, south of Gainesville, GA. We operate two repeaters on 145.35(-) & 444.45 (+) . These repeaters are being renovated under the expert guidance of Dennis, KF4MHW. For pictures of that site, see <http://www.saf.com/arc/wfox.html>

The current schedule for net operations include the Sunday Night Net on 146.820 (Linked to 145.35 on FOX) at 8PM EST and the Southeastern VHF Net on Wednesday evenings at 9PM. The 146.820 machine can also be dialed into IRLP and SKYWARN/Peachtree City during inclement weather.

## ASSOCIATE ORGANIZATIONS



## MEETING NOTICE

### WHEN:

Thursday DECEMBER 01 , 2005  
7:30PM

### WHERE:

Red Cross 1955 Monroe Drive –  
Atlanta

### PROGRAM:

### TALK IN:

146.820 (-) PL 146.2

*The Atlanta Radio Club, Inc.*  
**P.O. BOX 720398**  
**Atlanta, Georgia, 30358**

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# Show Them The Magic!

By Norm Fusaro, W3IZ ARRL Affiliated Club & Mentor Program Manager

***If you're like me, you remember the first time you heard hams on the HF bands. How cool was it to be able to sit in your chair and actually talk to another person across the country? There is something special about ham radio below***

And what about DX? *Oh, boy!*

Maybe your first exposure to DX was a gentlemanly contact where both stations followed a semi-formal protocol of exchanging information and describing the "WX" and "working conditions" before each promised to send a QSL via the bureau and sent mutual regards.

Perhaps your first DX was the chaotic ruckus of a pile up, where everyone was transmitting at the same time, and, as the DX was picking out stations, he called you. Without thinking you reacted and sent the quick exchange and logged a new one.

It wasn't until later that you learned there was actually a technique to working pile ups, but this time you raised your arms in triumphant celebration of being the one who got through and made the contact.

Maybe you were tuning around a band that seemed to be closed and you threw out a call, and from a quiet band someone halfway around the world answered you.

No matter how you experienced your first DX contact you can still look at it as one of the most exciting experiences of your life.

Whether it is a DX or a stateside contact, on HF there is the magic. This is not a little radio that looks like a cell phone and relies on a repeater system to be able to talk to hams around town. *No sir!* This is surfing in the deep water and catching the big waves. It's also the thing that impresses new hams and non-hams alike.

If you have been a ham for more than a day, I'm sure someone already has asked you, "How far can you talk on that radio?"

Amateur Radio has so many facets, but no single one is more recognized or associated with hams than HF--or shortwave. The mere mention of ham radio will make some people mimic the sound of a heterodyne as it changes pitch when the operator tunes in a station. *That's the magic.*

Turning the big knob and tuning in that distant signal is like the illusionist's trick of putting the girl in the box and sawing it in half. Making the contact is putting the two halves back together again. Working DX is making the girl in the box disappear. It's magic.

Magic is what hooks new hams. I am not knocking repeaters or the hams who use them. Repeaters have a place in the world of communications. But in the grand scheme of things FM repeater contacts are a mere card trick when compared to the magic of HF.

If you don't think that HF is magic and is the real pearl of ham radio then ask yourself, "Why is it that higher-class licensees are rewarded with greater HF privileges?" Because of the magic, that's why.

When new hams get that first ticket, they're proud of their accomplishment. They have every right to be proud. It takes a lot of study and hard work to get an Amateur Radio license. As a Technician class operator there are many activities that accompany your privileges. Besides the usual 2-meter FM simplex and repeaters, Technician class hams can communicate through Amateur Radio satellites, chase DX on 6 meters, bounce their signals off the moon (EME) or meteors (meteor scatter), send and receive television pictures with audio and work SSB or digital modes on the VHF and UHF amateur bands. Technicians can experiment with new modes and technologies, and they can participate in contests and public service events. There is a lot of ham radio to be had when one earns an entry-level license.

However, when asked, most new hams expect eventually to be able to operate on the ham bands below 30 MHz. There is something about the magic of HF that they want to experience.

When I talk about magic I am not talking about gags or illusions. HF is not some card trick or the "handshake buzzer" of communications. These things don't attract people and pique their curiosity. *Real magic is what*

*(Continued on page 6)*

## METRO TESTING SESSIONS

Call ahead to verify session and be prepared with the appropriate forms and required papers. A small fee may be charged. Check with the VEC

### Athens, GA

1st Monday of each EVEN-numbered month at 7:00 pm 2095 W. Broad Street.  
Contact: EDWIN FUQUA, N4VA  
(706) 354-1727 E: edwin.fuqua@charter.net

### Cartersville, GA

1st Tuesday of each month at the Cartersville Kroger. Contact: JODI POWELL, AG4BK  
(770) 387-1591

### Gainesville, GA

1st Sunday of EVEN-numbered months  
Johnson High School, 3305 Poplar Springs Rd  
Contact: ALFRED WESTBROOK, KT4VP  
(770) 965-4901 Email: kt4vp@arrrl.net

### Lilburn, GA

Gwinnett Amateur Radio Society  
4th Friday of Every Month at 7:00 pm  
St. John Neumann Church 801 Tom Smith Rd  
Contact: Howie Gould, W9HG (770)921-8362  
Headphones provided for CW tests.

### Milledgeville, GA ARRL / VEC

2nd Saturday of each month at 10:00 am  
at the Mary Vinson Memorial Library, 151 S.  
Jefferson Stacross from the Georgia Military  
Academy. Contact: OTIS MURPHY W4OY  
(478) 452-6394 Email: W4OY@arrrl.net

### Peachtree City, GA

1st Thursday of EVEN-numbered months at 7:00 pm, and the 2nd Saturday of ODD-numbered months at 10:00 am at the Peachtree City Library, downstairs meeting room. Contact: JAN DUBROCA, KN4JD (770) 502-0760

### Snellville, GA

2nd Tuesday of every month at 7:00 pm  
at Walton EMC, 3645 Lenora Church Road.  
Contact: WAYNE TAYLOR, WD3CCA  
(770) 498-7759

### Stone Mountain, GA ARRL / VEC

Alford Memorial Radio Club  
2nd Saturday of ODD-numbered months at 8:30 am  
Stone Mountain United Methodist Church,  
5312 W. Mountain St.  
Contact: BOB VARONE, W4ETN  
(770) 978 3179 Email: bvarone@juno.com

### Atlanta, GA

4th Sunday of each month, 2:30pm Georgia Tech  
Visit <http://cyberbuzz.gatech.edu/w4aql/test.html> for more information and to sign up for a mailing list.

No pre-registration is required.

Email: w4aql-ve@cyberbuz.gatech.edu (emails preferred over phone calls) Phone: 404-894-2936

## UPCOMING HAMFEST CALENDAR

Florida State Convention/Tampa Bay Hamfest  
Florida Gulf Coast Amateur Radio Council  
<http://www.tampabayhamfest.org>

Talk-In: 145.190 minus offset

### Contact:

Jim Schilling, KG4JSZ  
44 Joel Massey Road  
Haines City, FL 33844  
Phone: 407-356-3574  
Fax: 407-356-9235  
Email: [kg4jsz@arrrl.net](mailto:kg4jsz@arrrl.net)

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# Improving Satellite Reception, Part 1

(Continued from page 4)

pulls them in. I'm talking about the Merlin the Magician kind of magic, where spells are cast upon ordinary people transforming them into travelers of the universe.

There's nothing in my hands and nothing up my sleeve. The hat is empty, and all sides of the box are open to reveal nothing. Now watch closely as I pull a signal out of thin air. *Abracadabra!* and just like magic you are traveling along at the speed of light to a faraway place.

The real magic is that you have not left your home, and you have not connected to an Internet Service Provider or a telephone jack. There is no relay station or repeater. You are riding the magic carpet of the airwaves, passing through distant and exotic locales, meeting interesting people and experiencing cultures beyond those available in your own neighborhood. *What a ride!* This, my friends, is ham radio.

Now if you want to *really* impress a new ham, you need to go beyond the magic. Just as the magician on stage uses his props to draw in his audience, you too must rely on "stuff." The more stuff the better. While today's technology can pack a lot of magic into a little box, this is merely a parlor trick as compared to Houdini dangling by his feet 20 stories above the street trying to escape from a strait jacket.

As a mentor you must be one part showman, one part wizard and one part magician. Think about this: When we go to the ham shack--whether it is upstairs or downstairs, through a hallway, out in a shed or down in the basement--we are taking the secret passage to where the magic is. Once inside the room of secrets, relics from the past keep alive the stories of those who have tried the magic before us. The glow of the amber windows gives our new ham a glimpse into the past while we show them the ride of the future. Ham radio seemingly allows us to transcend the laws of physics and, as if by levitation or some other illusion, we are able to stand firmly in the past while we play in the future.

In order to perpetuate the magic we need to show them the stuff. I am not referring to junk. Nobody wants to see a rusting heap of scrap. Broken chassis and scraps of wire, boxes with missing knobs and parts, heaps of obsolete electronics removed from service, those "round tuit" projects that will never be complete. These things do not impress people. If

anything, they'll make the newcomer turn and run. He or she will want no part of ham radio if this is what they are exposed to.

This is why every ham needs a relic or two. It does not need to be a museum piece nor does it have to be very old. Displaying relics alongside the modern equipment not only impresses the newbie but it also reminds us of where the magic comes from.

QSL cards also remind us of the magic. Every QSL card is a bookmark in time that reminds us that two individuals were able to have a human interaction through the magic of radio. While a card from a rare and exotic place we've contacted may be impressive, a card from a memorable QSO or from someone who turned into a longtime friend can also inspire new hams to discover the magic for themselves.

Put the new ham in the chair. Share the headphones. Let your guest turn the big dial and tune in the signals. They are not just watching the show, they are experiencing the magic firsthand. Make the call. Introduce your new friend to the hams of the world. You have just given them a guided tour of the galaxy. This is most certainly more impressive than kerchunking a repeater with your handheld.

So, the next time somebody asks you about ham radio, *show* them the magic!

The [ARRL multimedia library](#) offers several PowerPoint presentations on the subject of HF operating. These are free to download and make excellent programs for club meetings or mentor sessions.

Some of the titles include:

*Ham Radio 101* by Ward Silver, N0AX (Ham Radio For Dummies)

*A Beginner's Guide to Amateur Radio Contesting 4M7X DXpedition to Venezuelaby Dean Straw, N6BV, ARRL Assistant Technical Editor*

*Discover the Magic of HF Radio* HF Mobile Operating NVIS (Near Vertical Incidence Skywave) by Norm Fusaro, W3IZ ARRL Affiliated Club & Mentor Program Manager

**ATLANTA RADIO CLUB, INC P.O. Box 720398 Atlanta, GA 30358**

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## SSETI Express is now OSCAR

SSETI Express is now OSCAR 53: AMSAT-NA has designated the now-problematic SSETI Express satellite as OSCAR 53--XO-53 for short. Launched October 27, the satellite, which carries an Amateur Radio package and deployed three ham radio cubesats, went silent after about five orbits. Based on telemetry received during its short period of operation, SSETI Express Project Manager Neil Melville has cited an apparent onboard power system anomaly. The spacecraft went into a "safe mode" due to an "undervoltage" condition caused by battery charging problems, Melville has said, adding that ground-based hardware tests confirm the possibility of a further failure mode of the specific component that would allow the batteries to charge and the spacecraft to resume operation. In thanking AMSAT's Bill Tynan, W3XO, and the AMSAT Board for notifying the project of the designation, Melville remained upbeat. "As you are no doubt aware XO-53, to use its new designation, has some significant problems right now," he said. "However, we remain vigilant and hopeful, perhaps it can be recovered." Graham Shirville,

G3VZV, says analysis of the actual cause of SSETI Express's problems continues, and a full review will

take place later this month. Shirville says a number of automated ground stations have been set up in Europe to listen for SSETI Express on 437.250 MHz. He also invites valid reception reports via e-mail from the Amateur Radio community, "and if you do hear it first we can promise you a bigger prize than just a special T-shirt!" he added. "We believe that there is a small but finite chance of recovery, so your efforts could be very worthwhile."

***THIS WOULD BE A  
GOOD PLACE TO  
ADVERTISE YOUR  
BUSINESS!***

ATLANTA RADIO CLUB, INC  
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## ***MEETING NOTICE - THURSDAY DEC 1, 2005***

### **SHARC....**

*(Continued from page 1)*

The Salem High Amateur Radio Society requires significant assistance, however, to become a reality. Assistance is needed in teaching the students about the hobby, especially in terms of electronic theory and HF operation. It would be tremendously helpful for members of the ARC to instruct myself and my students on being skilled operator and also to help design our station to make the best of our facility. I know that together we can make this great opportunity for the students of Salem a reality.